

Andronicus, Samuel Johnson's (mistaken) gloss, and the general presumption that the author hailed from Warwickshire. To refer to the *EDD* as proof that the word is Warwickshire dialect constitutes circular reasoning.

ROSALIND BARBER
Goldsmiths, University of London

doi:10.1093/notesj/gju225

© The Author (2015). Published by Oxford University Press.

All rights reserved. For Permissions,

please email: journals.permissions@oup.com

Advance Access publication 25 January, 2015

‘I HAVE FORGOT WHY I DID CALL THEE BACK’: EDITING ROMEO AND JULIET’S LEAVE-TAKING IN THE BALCONY SCENE

THE Balcony Scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the most famous scenes in all dramatic literature, might be expected to have been fully analysed and annotated by the play's numerous editors. Yet there is a striking loose end that has never received the attention it deserves. I quote the relevant passage from the recent Arden edition by René Weis:¹

JULIET A thousand times good night! [*Exit.*]

ROMEO A thousand times the worse to want thy light.

155
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books,
But love from love toward school with heavy looks.

Enter JULIET again.

JULIET Hist, Romeo, hist! O, for a falconer's voice
To lure this tassel-gentle back again—
Bondage is hoarse and may not speak aloud,

160
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine
With repetition of my ‘Romeo’.

ROMEO It is my soul that calls upon my name.
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,

165
Like softest music to attending ears.

JULIET Romeo!

ROMEO My nyas?

JULIET What o'clock tomorrow
Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO By the hour of nine.

JULIET I will not fail. 'Tis twenty year till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back. 170

¹ René Weis (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet*, Arden Shakespeare (London, 2012).

ROMEO Let me stand here till thou remember it.

(II.ii.154–171)

The line that poses problem is the penultimate: why does Juliet say ‘I have forgot why I did call thee back’? The purpose of her action seems clear, namely to ask Romeo when to send for him the next day (167–168). The situation is admittedly one of heightened emotion, and Juliet might be forgiven for speaking or behaving inconsistently. Nonetheless, one would expect editors to draw attention to what appears to be a straightforward contradiction: Juliet calls back Romeo, makes clear why, but then states she has forgotten why she has done so.

The best explanation for the contradiction can be found in the first quarto (Q1) of *Romeo and Juliet*, published in 1597. Modern editions are chiefly based on the second quarto (Q2) of 1599, a so-called ‘good’ quarto, whereas Q1 belongs to the group of texts traditionally labelled ‘bad’ quartos.² In Q1, the passage reads as follows:

Iul: Romeo?

Ro: Madame.

Iul: At what a clocke to morrow shall I send?

Ro: At the houre of nine.

Iul: I will not faile, tis twentie yeares till then.

Romeo I haue forgot why I did call thee backe.

Rom: Let me stay here till you remember it.

(sigs. D3r–v)

In Q1's penultimate line of this passage, Juliet begins by calling Romeo back *again*: ‘Romeo’.³ The accompanying action, as usual, is not spelled out,⁴ but what we are led to imagine is that the lovers are about to part separately after ‘tis twentie yeares till then’, but then Juliet calls Romeo back, and so he returns, only to be told by Juliet that she cannot remember why she has called him back. When I edited Q1 for the New Cambridge

² For the revaluation of the ‘bad’ quartos and that of *Romeo and Juliet* in particular, see Laurie E. Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The ‘Bad’ Quartos and Their Contexts* (Cambridge, 1996) and Lukas Erne (ed.), *The First Quarto of Romeo and Juliet*, The New Cambridge Shakespeare: The Early Quartos (Cambridge, 2007).

³ The roman ‘R’ where one would expect italic is the result of type shortage.

⁴ For the difficulty of inferring stage action from theatrical texts that are largely devoid of stage directions, see Alan C. Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (Cambridge, 1995).

Shakespeare subseries of 'The Early Quartos', I added two stage directions to signal the implied action:

JULIET I will not fail; 'tis twenty years till then.

[*Juliet and Romeo about to exit separately. Juliet returns.*]

Romeo!

[*Romeo returns*]

I have forgot why I did call thee back.

(v.186–188)⁵

None of the Q2-based scholarly editions I have consulted address the contradiction in Juliet's 'I have forgot why I did call thee back'. Weis notes that 'did call' is 'another use by Juliet of emphatic "do" (see also 119)';⁶ the other editors, George Walton Williams, Brian Gibbons, G. Blakemore Evans, John F. Andrews, Jill L. Levenson, David Bevington, John Jowett, Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, and Jay L. Halio, provide no note for the line.⁷ Horace Howard Furness's New Variorum Shakespeare edition of *Romeo and Juliet* is similarly silent on it, suggesting earlier editors did not comment on the passage either.⁸ Nor, surprisingly, does any modern editor record the difference between Q1 and Q2 in a collation note. Readers of modern editions are thus prevented from noticing that the oddity in Juliet's line may be related to a textual difference between Q1 and Q2.

What appears to have happened is that the word with which Juliet calls back her beloved a second time has been accidentally omitted from the text printed in Q2: 'Romeo'. The

omission seems plausible for four reasons: (i) as just shown, it accounts for the contradiction in the passage; (ii) it is easy to explain how it came about; (iii) there are a number of other passages in Q2 that only make sense by importing or substituting words from Q1; and, (iv) the emended passage is consistent with Shakespeare's dramaturgy in this scene as a whole.

To explain how the omission of the word in Q2 may have come about, it is important to remember that a proper name at the beginning of the line of a character who is on stage could have been mistaken for a speech heading when a manuscript was copied or typeset. Proper names in the dialogue text and speech headings would both likely have been in italic script, which could have contributed to the confusion. There is good evidence that this happened not only once but twice in the relevant passage of the Balcony Scene. A few lines before we reach Juliet's 'I have forgot why I did call thee back', we have the following passage in Q2 (corresponding to lines 163–164 in the Arden edition quoted above):

With repetition of my *Romeo*.

Ro. It is my soule that calls vpon my name.

(Q2, sig. D4r)

In Q1, the equivalent passage reads:

With repetition of my *Romeos* name.

Romeo?

Ro. It is my soule that calles vpon my name,

(Q1, sig. D3r)

In Q2, '*Romeo*' ends the sentence Juliet speaks to herself, but in Q1 she actually calls him by repeating, quite appropriately, Romeo's name, thereby prompting his response: 'It is my soule that calles vpon my name'. Jowett rightly points out that 'Romeo's response suggests that Q1 is right'.⁹ Accordingly, the Oxford *Complete Works* prints the text of Q1: 'With repetition of my Romeo's name. Romeo!' (II.i.208).¹⁰ Jowett's reasoning is compelling, but it makes sense to apply it also to the slightly later passage in which Q1 has but Q2 does not have Juliet call 'Romeo', and thus to

⁵ Erne, *The First Quarto of Romeo and Juliet*.

⁶ Weis, *Romeo and Juliet*, 198.

⁷ George Walton Williams (ed.), *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet* (Durham, NC, 1964), Brian Gibbons (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet*, Arden Shakespeare (London, 1980), G. Blakemore Evans (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet*, New Cambridge Shakespeare (Cambridge, 1984, updated edn 2003), Evans (ed.), *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (Boston, 1997), John F. Andrews (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet*, Everyman Shakespeare (London, 1993), Jill L. Levenson (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet*, Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford, 2000), David Bevington (ed.), *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 5th edn (New York, 2003), John Jowett (ed.), in Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (gen. eds), *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2005), Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (eds), *William Shakespeare: Complete Works*, RSC Shakespeare (New York, 2007), and Jay L. Halio (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet: Parallel Texts of Quarto 1 (1597) and Quarto 2 (1599)* (Newark, 2008).

⁸ Horace Howard Furness (ed.), *Romeo and Juliet*, A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare (Philadelphia, 1871).

⁹ Jowett, in Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, with John Jowett and William Montgomery, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford, 1987), 295.

¹⁰ Q2 also omits the final word in the preceding line, 'mine'. The manuscript may well have been defective.

emend both passages. Just as Romeo's 'It is my soule that calles vpon my name' suggests that Juliet has just called Romeo's name, so Juliet's 'I haue forgot why I did call thee backe' suggests that she has just called him back. In both cases, Q1's Juliet does the calling, whereas Q2's, oddly, does not. In both cases, Q2 deserves to be emended by recovering Q1's 'Romeo'.

Modern editors regularly fix the text of Q2 by recourse to Q1, which means that the emendation for which I argue would be unexceptional. Here is a selective list of readings quoted from Weis's Arden edition in which the words I have italicized depart from Q2 and are adopted from Q1: 'It is an *honour* that I dream not of (I.iii.67; Q2 'houre'); 'Nor *no without-book prologue, faintly spoke* / *After the prompter, for our entrance*' (I.iv.7–8; not in Q2); 'Pricked from the lazy finger of a *maid*' (I.iv.69; Q2 'woman'); '*pronounce* but "love" and "*dove*"' (II.i.10; Q2 'prouaunt', 'day'); 'he that shot so *trim*' (II.i.13; Q2 'true'); 'Her *eyes* in heaven' (II.ii.20, Q2 'eye'); 'And *fire-eyed* fury be my conduct now' (3.1.126; Q2, 'fier end'); 'I have an interest in your *hates* proceeding' (III.i.190; Q2 'hearts'); 'And *doleful* dumps the mind oppress' (IV.v.124; not in Q2); 'Then I *defy* you, stars!' (V.i.24; Q2, 'denie'); 'Under yon *yew* trees' (V.iii.3; Q2, 'young'); and 'I do defy thy *conjurat[i]on*' (V.iii.69; Q2, 'commiration'). In all these passages, modern editors routinely credit Q1 with sufficient authority to draw on it when Q2 seems deficient. They would have every reason to do the same in the passage preceding Juliet's 'I have forgot why I did call thee back'.

The recovery of Romeo's name in this passage is also fitting because so much of the Balcony Scene is so memorably about that name: 'O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo? / Deny thy father and refuse thy name, / ... / 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy. / ... O be some other name! / What's in a name?' (II.ii.33–42). The word 'name' recurs with striking frequency, especially early in the scene, when it appears nine times in fewer than twenty-five lines. Romeo pronounces Juliet's name only once in the entire scene, and he does so before she enters: 'what light through yonder window breaks? / It is the east, and Juliet is the sun' (II.ii.2–3). Juliet, by

contrast, pronounces Romeo's at least twelve times: 'O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore are thou Romeo?' (33); 'So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called, / Retain that dear perfection which he owes / Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name' (45–7); 'Art thou not Romeo' (60); 'O gentle Romeo' (93); 'Three words, dear Romeo' (142); 'Hist, Romeo, hist!' (158); 'With repetition of my "Romeo"' (163); 'Romeo!' (167). As we have seen, Jowett emends line 163 by drawing on Q1, adding one more invocation of the name: 'With repetition of my Romeo's name. Romeo!' I argue that one further mention should be editorially recovered and two stage directions added to explain the implied stage action at what corresponds to line 170 in the Arden edition:

[Juliet and Romeo about to exit separately. Juliet returns.]
Romeo!

[Romeo returns]
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

With the text thus emended, we would be able to recognize how Shakespeare patterned the last movement of this memorable scene, the part devoted to the young lovers' 'protracted leave-taking'.¹¹ What punctuates it is Juliet's increasingly frequent and urgent calls for Romeo. The scene that started with Juliet's reflection on the importance of Romeo's name moves towards its conclusion with her repeated calling of that same name, as she prepares to say farewell (142), calls him after briefly leaving because of the Nurse (158), calls him again (163) and again (167) when he does not answer, and once more (170) after they had almost parted. This structure will only reveal itself to readers, however, if editors, in the future, no longer doff Romeo's name.

LUKAS ERNE

University of Geneva

doi:10.1093/notesj/gju241

© The Author (2015). Published by Oxford University Press.

All rights reserved. For Permissions,
please email: journals.permissions@oup.com

¹¹ For a brilliant analysis of the shape of this scene, see Emrys Jones, *Scenic Form in Shakespeare* (Oxford, 1971), 33–7. I take the phrase 'protracted leave-taking' from Jones (34).